



3 AM

By:
Sid. Jax Raven / S. Jax Raven

Address:186 Clinton St. Apt#9 Binghamton, N.Y 13905
Phone:(607)427-5655
E-mail:S.Jax_Raven@Yahoo.com

FADE IN:

MONTAGE - VARIOUS DISTORTED FOOTAGE

- Crime scene photos.
- Paranormal sightings.
- Surveillance videos.
- News clips of unsolved murders.

Each flickers and glitches like old VHS static. Images appear, vanish, reappear - faster, louder.

SMASH TO BLACK.

RED TEXT ON BLACK SCREEN:

3:00 AM is known as the Devil's Hour.
A time when demons, ghosts, and evil forces are strongest.
Many of America's most gruesome crimes
occur during this hour.

FADE IN:

TITLE CARD:

3:00 AM (white on black)

INT. STAN'S BEDROOM - MORNING

A BUZZING ALARM slices the silence.

CLOSE ON - DIGITAL CLOCK

7:45 AM

STAN BROWN (late 30s, awkward, taped glasses, chain-smoker)
lies tangled in sheets, a lit cigarette already in his lips.

He coughs, lights another from the one he finished, and
groans upright.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

A FROZEN HOT POCKET slams into the microwave.
A cup of cheap orange juice sloshes into a cloudy glass.

STAN plops into his chair, paper plate and plastic fork
ready.
Across from him, his scruffy dog - **BOSS** - watches intently.

STAN

This is mine.
You get the plate when I'm done.
Fair deal?

BOSS tilts his head. **STAN** smiles, pats him affectionately.

He flips on the small counter TV — static — then news.

TV NEWS REPORTER (V.O.)

Good morning, City. It's 8:00 AM —
this is Channel 14 News.

In today's top story, another body
has been found —
brutally stabbed. No witnesses. No
suspect.

Police now refer to the killer as
"The Midnight Slasher."

STAN doesn't flinch. He chews. He smokes. He listens.

He finishes, taps ash, sets the plate on the floor.

STAN

Have at it, champ.

BOSS dives in. Stan watches him for a beat, then tosses the
plate in the trash.

INT. STAN'S BEDROOM - LATER

STAN smokes. He packs dirty laundry into a basket.

STAN

(softly)

Be good while I'm out.
I'll be back soon.

BOSS watches him with silent loyalty.

EXT. CITY STREET - BUS STOP - DAY

STAN waits, basket in hand, cigarette in mouth.
A bus sighs to a stop.

EXT. LAUNDROMAT - LATER

Machines WHIR.

STAN steps outside for a smoke. The street's empty.

Clothes dry in spinning drums.

STAN thumbs through a crumpled tabloid.

He's alone. The silence is heavy.

EXT. CITY STREETS - SUNSET

STAN carries a packed basket. He lights another cigarette as he enters.

BOSS charges over. Happy tail. Happy eyes.

STAN

Did you miss me?

Course you did.

STAN drops the basket. Pets Boss. Sits.

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

12:00 PM blinks on the clock.

STAN eats a PB&J and drinks a Cola. **BOSS** watches.

STAN

Food's in your bowl, buddy.

I got mine.

He fills **BOSS'S** water dish, drops in kibble.

They sit together, background TV murmuring.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

8:00 PM on the clock.

STAN eats leftover takeout. The NEWS is back.

EVENING NEWS REPORTER (V.O.)

The latest **Midnight Slasher** victim:

Jessica Mary Darrow, 21, last seen

at 2:45 AM

outside Club Berry.

She never made it home.

STAN turns off the TV. Silence.

He scratches **BOSS** behind the ears. Lights another smoke.

STAN

You'd protect me, huh?

If some freak came in here?

BOSS whines softly.

STAN checks his phone. Yawns.

STAN (CONT'D)
(sighs)
Yeah. Long day.

He flicks his cigarette out — embers trail in the dark.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. STAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The digital clock glows: **9:00 PM**

STAN changes into worn pajamas. He flicks off the bedside lamp and slides under the covers.

DISSOLVE TO:

STAN'S DREAM - EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Drunken neon light spills from a nearby bar.

JESSICA DARROW (21), tipsy and disoriented, stumbles out. She dials her phone, clutching it with one hand while the other braces a lamppost.

JESSICA
(slurred)
Hey, Mom... I'm so fucking drunk...

MOTHER (V.O.)
Are you okay to get home?

JESSICA
Yeah... I'm like eight blocks away.
Ugh, I think I'm gonna—

She doubles over, dry-heaving into the gutter.

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON - BOOTS WALKING

HEAVY. MEASURED. CLOSING THE DISTANCE.

A STEAK KNIFE flashes in the dark.

JESSICA stumbles down the sidewalk, alone, vulnerable.

A SHADOW moves behind her.

Suddenly – an arm hooks around her throat.

The knife SLASHES across her neck – a fountain of arterial spray.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
(gurgling)
Hhhrkk...

She gasps, trembles, collapses. The blade plunges again – into her chest, stomach, again, again.

Her body lies still in a widening pool of blood.

CLOSE ON - BOOTS WALKING AWAY

Trailing blood.

THE STEAK KNIFE drips steadily.

INT. STAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CLOCK: 3:00 AM

The room is deathly still.

CANDLES on the dresser ignite themselves.

THE CROSS flips upside down.

BLOOD begins to seep from the walls.

STAN BOLTS upright – eyes glassy, vacant.

POV - **STAN'S** EYES

His movements are slow, mechanical.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

STAN opens a drawer.
Retrieves a STEAK KNIFE.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

He puts on jeans. A black hoodie. No emotion.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

BOOTS WALKING down the sidewalk.
STEAK KNIFE swinging low.

STAN follows a COUPLE walking ahead — laughing, unaware.

POV - **STAN'S EYES**

He watches them.

Stalking.

He CLOSES the distance — and STRIKES.

The knife slices the MAN's throat. He drops instantly.

The WOMAN turns, eyes wide—

She SCREAMS—

The blade punches into her gut.

She falls, twitching.

Blood everywhere.

STAN walks away — calm. The knife dripping in his hand.

INT. STAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CLOCK: 3:45 AM

STAN enters. Calm. Robotic.

In the kitchen, he rinses the bloody knife under the tap.

The candles flicker.

The cross stays inverted.

Blood continues to ooze down the walls.

He changes out of the hoodie. Hangs it neatly in the closet.

Back in bed. Pulls up the covers.

Eyes shut.

DEMON (V.O.)
(chuckling darkly)
Sleeeeeep tight... Hahahaha...

FADE TO BLACK.

ON-SCREEN TEXT - RED:

ONE DAY LATER - MONDAY

INT. STAN'S BEDROOM - MORNING

ALARM CLOCK: 7:45 AM

BZZZZZZZ! BZZZZZZZ!

STAN jolts awake. He's groggy, disheveled. No signs of last night's chaos.

— Candles: unlit.

— Cross on the wall: upright.

— Walls: spotless.

He yawns, reaches for a crumpled cigarette pack on the floor, lights one. Coughs.

He stretches, then starts getting dressed: plain dress slacks and a button up shirt T-SHIRT.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

STAN enters. Laundry basket still sits in the corner, forgotten.

BOSS, his loyal mutt, bounds up to him.

STAN
(to **BOSS**)
Today I gotta go see that kooky
doc.

He pets **BOSS**, opens the freezer, tosses a HOT POCKET into the microwave.

Pours a glass of milk. Paper plate. Plastic cutlery. Bare minimum.

He sits, eats, and watches **BOSS** stare at him like a priest at confession.

ON TV - CHANNEL 14 NEWS

CASSIE JOHNSON (V.O.)

Good morning, City. It's 8:00 AM.
I'm **Cassie Johnson**, and this is
Channel 14 News.

STAN chews, slow and distracted.

CASSIE (V.O.)

The Midnight Slasher has struck
again.
This time, a young couple found
early Sunday morning.
The male's throat was slit. The
woman - a single stab wound.

STAN'S chewing slows. His eyes don't blink.

CASSIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Police have no leads, no suspects,
no witnesses.

He turns off the TV before she finishes.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

STAN picks up his empty plate, tosses it, the plastic fork,
and Hot Pocket wrapper in the trash.

Lights another cigarette.

STAN

(to BOSS)

Alright... time to see that kooky
doctor.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - MORNING

STAN exits with a cigarette dangling from his lips. The old
laundry basket still sits on the stoop.

He locks the door and walks.

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - BRIEFING ROOM - DAY

The room buzzes with chatter - sports, sex, regrets.

Four VICTIM PHOTOS hang on the wall.

DETECTIVE SID CROSS (50s, grizzled, jaded) is slouched in a chair, feet up, eyes closed. Cigarette behind his ear.

DETECTIVE LAUREN SOSA (30s, sharp, focused) sits nearby, reviewing files and making notes.

CHIEF JACKSON (60s, steel-backed, respected) waits at the front.

The door swings open – enter **SERGEANT WILSON** (40s, sharp, composed). She walks past **CROSS**, smacks his forehead playfully.

WILSON

Wake up, cowboy.

She yanks his boots off the second chair, takes her place front and center.

WILSON (CONT'D)

Alright, listen up.

She holds up a newspaper with a bloody headline: **"MIDNIGHT SLASHER CLAIMS 3rd VICTIM."**

WILSON (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

victims. All under 35. All brutally killed.

Three different weapons. One thing in common:

Between midnight and 5 A.M.

(Beat)

We got no suspect. No witness. No evidence.

(taps the headline)

But we've got pressure. And that means you've got overtime.

(holds up a new patrol sheet)

New shifts. New partners. You'll find your names on this.

(over groans)

And joining us – our heavy hitters:

FBI Senior Detective SID CROSS...

CROSS stands with a mock bow.

...and Detective LAUREN SOSA.

Applause. Smirks. Someone mutters

"no pressure."

CHIEF JACKSON

(stepping up)

We're done playing defense.
The people want blood. Let's give
them justice.

(coldly)

Dismissed.

The detectives file out. Focused. Tense.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. CITY STREET - BUS STOP - MORNING

STAN stands alone, smoking. Bus hisses to a stop.

INT. BUS - MORNING

STAN stares out the window. Distant. Hollow.

EXT. BUS STOP - OUTSIDE MEDICAL CENTER - MORNING

STAN steps off. Walks toward the clinic.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

A small, modest office. A ticking clock. Soft lighting.

STAN sits across from his **THERAPIST DR. LENA HARROW** (early 40s, observant, calm, casual dress, badge clipped).

She flips through her notes. Patient but alert.

THERAPIST

So... how've the dreams been?

STAN

They're not bad.
Actually... they're kinda clear
now.
Detailed.

THERAPIST

Still violent?

STAN

Yeah. Very.

beat

STAN (CONT'D)

It's like... I'm there. Doing it.
And... I sleep better when I have
them.

She writes that down.

THERAPIST

Do they scare you?

STAN

Not really.
Honestly... I kinda enjoy them.

(beat)

STAN (CONT'D)

Feels like... a video game.

She looks up. Concern creeps in, but she stays composed.

THERAPIST

I'm going to try something new.
Two pills. Once a night.

She hands him an orange bottle. Stan eyes it.

STAN

Alright.

THERAPIST

Same time next week?

STAN

Tuesday. Ten?

THERAPIST

You got it.

STAN stands. Pockets the pills. Nods.

EXT. CITY STREET - BUS STOP - LATER

STAN lights another cigarette, waits.

INT. STAN'S WORKPLACE - DAY

STAN works alone. Focused. Silent.

Later, he steps outside for a cigarette. Stomps it out. Goes back in.

INT. STAN'S WORKPLACE - LATER

The final hours tick by.

STAN clocks out.

EXT. BUS STOP - EVENING

The last light of day fades. Streetlights flicker to life, humming faintly.

STAN stands alone, lighting a cigarette. He takes a long drag, tired.

A bus hisses to a stop. Doors creak open.

STAN boards without a word.

EXT. STAN'S APARTMENT BUILDING - EVENING

The bus pulls away. **STAN** steps off. He walks toward home — shoulders slumped, cigarette glowing in the dusk.

INT. STAN'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - EVENING

CLOCK: 7:55 PM

The door opens. **STAN** steps in. **BOSS**, his scruffy mutt, trots over, tail wagging.

STAN

Hey... were you a good boy?

Yeah, I bet you were. You always are.

Missed me, huh? I missed you too, buddy.

He kneels, giving **BOSS** a good scratch behind the ears.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

STAN fills the water bowl, tops off the dog food. **BOSS** munches contentedly.

STAN tosses a couple hot dogs in the microwave. Cracks open a can of cola.

He pulls out a paper plate, sets a cheap plastic fork beside it.

Microwave DINGS.

He grabs the plate, heads to the table.

INT. KITCHEN TABLE - MOMENTS LATER

STAN eats slowly. **BOSS** watches from the floor like a shadow.

The small TV on the counter flickers on.

ON TV - CHANNEL 14 EVENING NEWS

RYAN COOPER (V.O.)

Good evening, City. I'm **Ryan Cooper**, and this is Channel 14 News at 8.

STAN watches. Barely chews.

RYAN COOPER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

The body count from the "**Midnight Slasher**" has now reached three confirmed victims.

STAN'S chewing slows.

RYAN COOPER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Police still have no suspects, no witnesses, no leads. FBI agents **LAUREN SOSA** and Senior Detective **SID CROSS** have been brought in to assist.

RYAN COOPER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I'm no detective, folks... But how do this amount of people end up dead — and nobody sees a thing?

STAN stares at the screen, transfixed.

RYAN COOPER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

If you know anything, call 1-790-CRIME STOPPERS.

Beat.

RYAN COOPER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
That's it for Channel 14 News at 8.
I'm **Ryan Cooper**.
Stay safe, City.

STAN finishes his food, still staring at the screen.

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. BAR - NIGHT

SID CROSS (50s, wrecked and righteous) is slumped at the bar
— drunk, haunted.

A pile of empty shot glasses surround him. One half-full
glass waits beside them.

A small TV plays the same Channel 14 news broadcast in the
background.

SID stirs. Slowly sits up.

SID CROSS
(drunkenly)
We're gonna kill this
motherfucker...
I'm gonna put a bullet straight in
their head...

He downs his drink.

Slouches.

Passes out again.

INT. STAN'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

The TV clicks off. Silence settles.

STAN moves about the small kitchen, cleaning up his dinner.

He sets the paper plate on the floor. **BOSS** trots over, tail
wagging, licking up the scraps.

STAN kneels, absently stroking his fur.

A moment of quiet contentment.

He tosses the dirty plate and empty soda can in the trash.

He lights a cigarette, leans against the counter, and exhales
a long drag into the dim kitchen air.

INT. STAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

STAN sits on the edge of the bed, petting **BOSS**, who rests at his feet.

STAN
I'm kinda tired, **BOSS**.
I think it's time for bed.

The clock reads: 9:00 PM

STAN changes into worn-out pajamas. He opens a prescription bottle, pops two pills, and swigs them down with a sip of tap water from a glass.

He climbs under the covers.

Reaches over.

Clicks off the lamp.

Darkness.

DREAM SEQUENCE**- EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT**

CLOSE ON: **STAN'S BOOTS** tapping steadily along the pavement.

PAN UP TO: A BLOODY STEAK KNIFE IN HIS HAND — GLINTING
IN THE DARK UNDER STREETLIGHT.

POV - BEHIND A GIRL (**JESSICA, 21**)

She walks alone — wobbly, tipsy, unaware.

Suddenly —
A HAND reaches around her neck.
The knife SLASHES across her throat.

BLOOD SPRAYS like a high-pressure hose.

JESSICA gasps. Hands to her neck. Blood gushes through her fingers.

She gurgles, stumbles.

The blade STABS — again and again — her chest, her stomach.
Quick, brutal.

Her body is lowered to the ground. Gently.

She lies in a spreading POOL OF BLOOD.

CLOSE ON: The knife.
Blood DRIPS from the blade.

POV - STAN'S EYES

A YOUNG COUPLE walks ahead, talking quietly.

STAN'S steps quicken.

He lunges —
SLICES the man's throat.

MALE VICTIM
(gargling scream)
YYYUUUGGGHHH!

Blood sprays across the sidewalk.

The girl turns. She gasps — sees the collapsing body.

Then— the blade.
Rushing toward her.

GIRL VICTIM
(screams)
HHHHHHAAAAAA!

She's STABBED in the stomach.
She folds forward, gasping. Dies without ever seeing the face
behind the knife.

END DREAM SEQUENCE

Silence.

Blackness.

Then — a faint HUM begins.

Somewhere...
3:00 AM is coming.

INT. STAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CLOCK: 3:00 AM

BZZZT. The red digital numbers flicker slightly — almost
glitch.

A low, unnatural HUM vibrates through the walls.

CANDLES on the dresser ignite — one by one — as if kissed by
invisible flames.

The CROSS on the wall twists slowly... until it hangs upside down.

The walls begin to ooze blood – thick, slow rivulets sliding downward like tears from the drywall.

STAN lies in bed, eyes shut.

Then...

His eyes SNAP OPEN.

POV - STAN'S EYES

The world is tinted red. Everything feels slowed, warped.

STAN sits up, moving as if pulled by strings.

He swings his legs off the bed and stands.

Mechanically, he crosses to the closet.

He removes a black hooded sweatshirt. Slips it on over his pajamas.

He walks into...

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

He opens a drawer.

Inside: a ROW OF TOOLS – sharp and blunt, neatly arranged.

His hand hovers...

Then settles on a METAL CHAIN – rusted, heavy.

He wraps it loosely around his fist.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: BOOTS. Crunching through gravel. The CHAIN clinks faintly with each step.

STAN walks through the deserted streets – possessed, calm, cold.

He turns down a side alley.

Ahead, a WOMAN (mid-30s) in scrubs smokes outside the back of a building – maybe a nurse on break.

She doesn't see him yet.

STAN moves closer.

POV - STAN'S EYES

Her back is to him.

He approaches silently. Slowly.

One step. Then another.

Suddenly—he lunges.

The CHAIN wraps tight around her throat.

WOMAN
(gasping)
What-!? HHRRGHHHH—

She struggles. Scratches at him. He pulls tighter.

Her knees buckle.

She collapses.

STAN lowers her to the ground as her body twitches.

Her neck SNAPS. The alley falls silent again.

EXT. ALLEY - MOMENTS LATER

STAN walks away slowly — emotionless.
The CHAIN dangles, dripping blood.

INT. STAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

CLOCK: 3:45 AM

The door clicks open.

STAN enters. Blood still on his hands.

The candles still burn. The cross remains inverted.

The walls still bleed.

He places the chain back in the drawer — coiled like a serpent.

He removes the hoodie. Folds it.

Changes into pajamas.

He turns off the light.

Slides under the covers.

Eyes close.

DEMONIC VOICE (V.O.)

Sleep tight, Stanley... HAHAHAAAA!

FADE TO BLACK.

ON SCREEN TEXT – RED:

Wednesday

CUT TO:

INT. MENTAL HEALTH CLINIC - OFFICE - MORNING.

Soft daylight filters through Venetian blinds.

STAN'S THERAPIST DR. LENA HARROW (early 40s, observant, calm) sits at her desk. She's flipping through a thick manila folder labeled:

BROWN, STANLEY A.

Scrawled in red ink across the front:
"INCREASED FREQUENCY OF VIOLENT IDEATION"

She turns the page – reads a session note aloud, under her breath:

DR. HARROW

(reading out loud)

"Dreams vivid... increasingly
violent in detail.
Patient reports sense of control...
even enjoyment."

She pauses.

Reaches for her tablet, swipes through local news headlines:

"Midnight Slasher Claims Fourth Victim"

"No Suspects – Killings Between 2AM and 4AM"

She glances back at Stan's file.

Another note catches her eye:

"Experiences dreams between 1AM-4AM. No memory after."

Her jaw tightens slightly.

DR. HARROW (CONT'D)
 (to herself)
 It can't be...

She pulls out a printed prescription slip from the file — checks the dosage.

Her finger taps the page beside the line:

"Zaleplon - 2 pills nightly before sleep"

She stares at it, thinking — troubled.

Reaches for her office phone. Dials.

RECEPTIONIST (V.O.)
 Dr. Harrow's office.

DR. HARROW
 Hi. I need to move Stanley Brown's next appointment. Make it today. This afternoon. Emergency slot.

RECEPTIONIST (V.O.)
 We've got 2:30 open.

DR. HARROW
 Book it. And flag his chart red.

She hangs up.

Closes the file slowly. Stares at the front page.

INSERT - FILE COVER

"BROWN, STANLEY A."
 "MENTAL HEALTH RISK LEVEL: UNSTABLE
 - MONITORED"

CUT TO:

INT. STAN'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - LATE MORNING

STAN sits at the kitchen table, still in his dress slacks button up-shirt, staring at nothing.

The TV is off. **BOSS** lies curled at his feet, asleep.

Stan's cell phone BUZZES on the counter.

He glances at it:
DR. HARROW - CALLING

The screen fades to MISSED CALL.

He lights a cigarette.

Another BUZZ – voicemail notification.

He doesn't listen.

Instead, he stubs out the cigarette – then immediately lights another.

INT. DR. HARROW'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Dr. Harrow sits at her desk, glancing at her watch.

2:33 PM. Stan's appointment time has come and gone.

She dials again.

VOICEMAIL (V.O.)

Hey, this is Stan. Leave a message... or don't.

She hangs up without speaking.

Frustrated, she opens her laptop and begins a new clinical note:

"Patient missed emergency appointment. Prior sessions indicate deterioration. Potential risk to self/others. Recommend involuntary evaluation if noncompliance continues..."

She pauses.

A chill creeps into the air.

The blinds sway gently, though the window is shut.

A faint clicking sound begins – rhythmic, metallic.

Dr. Harrow freezes.

She looks around the room.

The clock on the wall stops ticking.

2:37 PM. Hands frozen.

The fluorescent lights above flicker once.

Then twice.

Then hold steady.

She rises slowly from her chair, stepping toward the door.

The clicking continues.

She opens the door to the hallway – nothing.

The sound stops.

She returns, unsettled.

Then she notices her desk drawer is slightly open.

She hadn't opened it today.

Dr. Harrow approaches. Slowly pulls it open.

Inside: just her pens, notes... and her wooden crucifix,
which used to stand on the shelf.

It now lies on its side – upside down.

She stares at it.

Beat.

Reaches out. Touches it.

The moment she lifts it–
THE FLUORESCENTS SNAP OFF.

Pitch black.

A whisper – so faint it's almost imagined.

DEMONIC WHISPER (V.O.)

Haaaaarrowwww...

The lights blink back on.

Dr. Harrow gasps, backing into her desk.

Everything looks the same.

But the cross still lies upside down.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. STAN'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

STAN stands at the window, staring out at the city.

The sky dims. Dusk approaches.

Behind him, **BOSS** growls softly at the wall.

STAN doesn't notice.

He lights another cigarette, exhales slowly.

His phone BUZZES again on the table.

He doesn't look.

The voicemail indicator blinks.
Ignored.

INT. STAN'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

CLOCK ON WALL:

7:52 PM

The microwave HUMS. **STAN** paces slowly, smoking.

He's eaten the same thing three nights in a row — leftover takeout on a paper plate. A half-warm can of Coke sits sweating beside him.

BOSS lies in his dog bed, eyes tracking **STAN'S** movement. He doesn't wag. Doesn't blink.

Something's off.

STAN
You hungry, boy?

He drops a couple pieces of food into the bowl. **BOSS** doesn't move.

STAN stares at him, confused.

INT. STAN'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

TV glows — the Channel 14 Evening News.

STAN doesn't watch it.

He just sits. Smoking.

THE NEWS ANCHOR (V.O.)
drones in the background,
mentioning forensics, missing
persons, police frustration...

The words blur.

STAN zones out, staring at the wall.

**VOICEMAIL (V.O.) - DR. HARROW
(RECORDED)**

Stan, it's Dr. Harrow again.
Please... call me back.
You missed your appointment today.
It's important we speak soon.
I'm worried about—

He deletes it without listening further.

Another drag of his cigarette.

INT. STAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

9:12 PM

STAN stands at his dresser. The room is dim, the air strangely still.

He stares at the cross on the wall.

It's normal.

Still upright.

He frowns, as if expecting something else.

He takes out his pills, stares at them in his palm.

Then — changes his mind. Doesn't take them.

He tosses them back in the bottle.

INT. STAN'S KITCHEN - LATER

The apartment is quiet.

STAN moves in slow, deliberate silence. He opens a drawer. Pauses.

Inside: kitchen tools. A few knives. Something catches his eye.

His hand hovers above the drawer — indecisive.

Then... closes it.

He grabs a glass of water instead. Drinks it. Forces normalcy.

Behind him, **BOSS** sits silently, watching.

INT. STAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

10:00 PM

STAN is in bed, lights off.

He lies on his back, eyes open.

Breathing slow. Controlled.

Outside, a siren wails in the distance.

Inside, only silence.

Until—

A low HUM begins.

Barely audible.

Like wind under a door.

CAMERA PUSHES IN ON STAN'S FACE

His eyes begin to flutter.

His breathing hitches.

SERIES OF DREAM SEQUENCES:

-- CLOSE ON: STAN'S BOOTS WALKING

-- PAN UP TO: STEAK KNIFE glinting

-- POV: JESSICA walks unaware, a shadow lunges, her neck slashed, blood gushes

-- MALE VICTIM's throat cut, GIRL stabbed

-- POV: Woman choked with chain, neck snapped.

-- BLOODY HANDS under running water

The digital clock beside him ticks forward...

2:58 AM.

2:59 AM.

3:00 AM.

INT. STAN'S BEDROOM - SAME MOMENT

CANDLES ignite.

The CROSS turns slowly upside down.

Blood begins to seep from the baseboards.

STAN bolts upright.

His eyes are glossy red – soulless.

(POV - STAN'S EYES):

He moves in a trance. Steady. Silent.

He opens the closet.

Reaches for a black hoodie.

INT. STAN'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

POV - STAN'S EYES

The drawer slides open with a soft *scrape*.
His hand reaches in, wraps around the claw hammer.
Lifts it – slow, deliberate.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

POV - STAN'S EYES

Boots step soundlessly down the empty sidewalk.

Up ahead: a HOMELESS MAN sleeps in a rolled-up sleeping bag,
tucked against a building wall.

CLOSE ON - STAN'S BOOTS as they near the man.

PAN UP - THE CLAW HAMMER, now raised.

A moment of stillness...

Then:

THUD. THUD. THUD.

Sickening, wet *cracks*.

The hammer rises and falls. Bones snap beneath the blows.
The sleeping bag darkens with blood, soaking fast.

STAN breathes slow. Calm.

EXT. STAN'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

He walks up the steps – hammer still in hand, dripping.

Unbothered. As if returning from a jog.

INT. STAN'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

POV - STAN'S EYES

The wall clock reads: 3:45 AM.

STAN opens the drawer.
Gently places the bloodied claw hammer back inside.
Closes it.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

STAN washes his hands, blood swirling down the sink.

He lifts his gaze to the mirror.

For a split second — just behind him — a DEMONIC FACE
flashes. Hollow eyes. Grinning.

STAN doesn't react.

He dries his hands. Calm. Controlled.

INT. STAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CANDLES flicker.

The cross remains upside down.

Dark red liquid oozes down the walls, like tears.

STAN removes his hoodie. Strips off his bloody clothes, drops
them into the laundry hamper.

He changes into sleepwear.

Pulls back the covers.

Gets into bed.

A DEMONIC VOICE (V.O.)
Sleeeeeeep tightttttt... Hahaha!

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - EARLY MORNING

YELLOW POLICE TAPE flutters in a damp breeze. A in mist lingers in the air.

SIRENS echo distantly. The body is gone, but what remains tells the story — a dark pool of blood staining concrete beside a rumpled sleeping bag.

DETECTIVE LAUREN SOSA (razor-sharp) crouches near the splatter. Gloved hands brush the blood-darkened pavement.

DETECTIVE SID CROSS (rumpled, cynical) looms nearby, nursing burnt coffee, eyes sweeping the foggy street like he's daring the killer to show himself.

FORENSIC TECH (O.S.)

We found skull fragments. Whatever he used — he didn't stop at the first blow.

SOSA

He never does.

She rises, turning toward **CROSS**.

SOSA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Another random. No ID. Looks unhoused. Probably slept here every night.

CROSS

No witnesses. No cameras. This guy walks through shadows.

He flicks his empty coffee cup into a trash bin.

SOSA

Not shadows. Patterns. He's escalating.

CROSS

You call this escalation? It's already fucking medieval.

SOSA

No signature, no M.O., no ritual. Just chaos. That's escalation. Like he's... testing himself.

CROSS

Or rehearsing.

Their eyes meet. A chill between them.

SOSA

If this is buildup — what's he building to?

CROSS

Something we're not ready for.

He lights a cigarette. Silence between them.

SOSA

You ever seen anything like this?

CROSS

Yeah.

SOSA

Where?

CROSS

(beat)
Nightmares.

INT. MENTAL HEALTH CLINIC - DR. HARROW'S OFFICE - MORNING

DR. EVELYN HARROW (sharp-eyed, composed) stands at the window. Overcast skies roll in over the skyline. Her gaze is distant. Troubled.

A thick case file sits on her desk: **"BROWN, STANLEY."**

She flips it open. Missed appointments. Slipping behavior. Handwritten clinical notes. Sleep disturbances. Bipolar episodes.

She hits play on her desk voicemail.

STAN (V.O.)

Hey, Dr. Harrow... I, uh... missed today.
Totally spaced. Been sleeping weird again.
Lots of dreams... real vivid.
Anyway. I'll reschedule...

She stops. Rewinds.

STAN (V.O.) (REPEATED)

...lots of dreams...

Her expression hardens. Something clicks.

INT. HARROW'S OFFICE - LATER

Dr. Harrow sits surrounded by reports. Psychological evaluations. Medication logs.

She flips open a sketch from six weeks prior — drawn during a session with Stan.

A black figure. Surrounded by fire.
Victims on the ground. One levitating.

Her pen stops mid-air.

She dials his number.

VOICEMAIL (O.S.)

Hey, this is STAN. Leave a message... or don't.—

She hangs up.

The light overhead flickers once.

Twice.

She turns to look.

Empty room.

The bulb steadies.

Then — a drawer in her filing cabinet slides open with a dull creak.

She stares at it. Unmoving.

Walks to it.

Nothing inside.

She pushes it closed slowly.

Turning back, her eyes catch something on the window glass.

A dark smudge. Smear-like. Finger? Claw?

She touches it — from the inside. It's outside the glass.

She rubs. It doesn't come off.

The temperature drops. Her breath fogs.

She shudders, rubs her arms.

RING. RING. RING.

The phone blares. She jumps.

Answers it.

HARROW

Hello?

Silence.

Then faint static. A breath. A voice, low and guttural:

VOICE (V.O.)

You're next...

CLICK.

Dial tone.

She stands frozen. Her pulse racing.

She stares at the window again. The smudge is gone.

Then — a shift in her body. Her fear hardens. Becomes focus.

She pulls **STAN'S** file close, flips it open, and opens her laptop.

HARROW

(softly)

This is bigger than **STAN**

INT. STAN'S BEDROOM - MORNING

ALARM CLOCK:

7:45 AM — blaring its familiar BUZZZZZZ!

STAN groans. Smacks the alarm off. He blinks slowly, disoriented. He's sweating.

The CANDLES on the dresser are out.
The CROSS on the wall is upright.
No blood. No sound.

He breathes — slow. Controlled.

INT. BATHROOM - MORNING

He stares at himself in the mirror, toothbrush in hand.

His eyes are puffy. Rimmed red.

He notices a tiny cut on his knuckle. Dried blood.

STAN

(muttering)

Probably from the microwave door...

He washes his hands – more thoroughly than necessary.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

He prepares breakfast like always: cereal, milk, plastic spoon. But slower. Mechanical.

BOSS doesn't come running.

STAN

BOSS? ...Hey, c'mon, boy.

Silence.

He looks down to the dog bowl – full. Unmoved.

He places the cereal box on the counter, opens the apartment door slightly, peers into the hall.

No sign of **BOSS**.

He closes the door, more confused than concerned.

STAN (CONT'D)

(muttering)

Must've slipped out again. He'll come back...

INT. KITCHEN TABLE - MOMENTS LATER

STAN eats quietly. TV murmuring in the background.

TV ANCHOR (V.O.)

—police are urging the public to remain vigilant as the Midnight Slasher now claims five victims—

STAN raises the volume slightly. Stops chewing.

TV ANCHOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

—latest body discovered behind a gas station on 14th and Garfield, a man believed to be homeless—

STAN'S hand tightens around the spoon.

TV ANCHOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
—authorities say the murder weapon
appears to be a heavy blunt object,
such as a hammer of sorts....

STAN turns off the TV.

He sits in silence. The spoon still halfway to his mouth.

Then, quickly — he finishes the cereal. Forcefully. Mouthful
after mouthful.

He gets up. Tosses the spoon and bowl in the trash.

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

STAN locks the door. Pauses.

He looks at the sidewalk. Down the road. Hesitating.

Then moves on.

INT. BUS - LATER

STAN sits in the rear, eyes shifting nervously between
passengers. A woman coughs. A man glances at him.

STAN tightens his grip on the railing.

His knee **bounces** uncontrollably.

He looks out the window — and briefly sees his own reflection
staring back at him, but the eyes are wrong.

Too dark. Too still.

He jerks away. Looks again. Just his normal face now.

STAN
(mutters)
Jesus... get a grip.

INT. WORKPLACE - DAY

STAN stocks shelves in a fluorescent-lit warehouse.

A **BOSS FIGURE** walks by. Doesn't even look at him.

A coworker bumps into him by accident.

COWORKER

Sorry, man.

STAN flinches. Stares too long.

COWORKER (CONT'D)

(chuckles nervously)

You good?

STAN

Yeah. Fine. Just... tired.

Coworker nods and moves on.

STAN returns to stacking boxes, but his hands shake.

INT. WORK BREAKROOM - LUNCH

STAN eats from a plastic container. Barely chews.

A few workers joke nearby. Stan doesn't engage.

A NEWS BROADCAST plays on the small breakroom TV.

TV ANCHOR (V.O.)

—reminder, a \$25,000 reward has
been offered to anyone who can
provide information leading to an
arrest—

STAN gets up. Dumps his food, half-eaten.

Goes outside.

EXT. WORKPLACE - LOADING DOCK - MOMENTS LATER

STAN stands near the dumpster. Lights a cigarette.

A bird caws loudly overhead — making him jump.

He looks up, eyes twitching. Then—

He sees it.

A handprint. Bloody.

On the wall. Just for a moment.

Then it's gone.

He rubs his eyes. Finishes the cigarette with shaking fingers.

STAN

(low, to himself)

It's just dreams... it's just...

He stares down at his hands.

Worn. Calloused. Tensed.

EXT. STAN'S WORKPLACE - MIDDAY MOMENTS LATER

STAN leaves work, scared -rushes home. He's Deathly afraid, But not of anyone. He's scared and afraid of himself.

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. STAN'S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

The room is dim. Blinds drawn.

STAN sits on his bed. Smoking. The TV plays static, long forgotten.

KNOCK. KNOCK.

STAN doesn't move.

Another knock. Louder this time.

DR. HARROW (O.S.)

STAN? It's **Dr. Harrow**.

He blinks. Slowly sits up - alert but motionless.

DR. HARROW (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I know I probably shouldn't be here unannounced. But you've missed two appointments. I'm... concerned.

Silence.

DR. HARROW (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I just want to talk.

STAN'S eyes flick toward the door.

INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY - SAME

Dr. Harrow stands holding Stan's file in one hand, her other resting near the door frame.

Behind her, the hallway feels unnaturally still.

She exhales and raises her hand to knock again—

The door CREAKS open.

She steps inside.

INT. STAN'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

The air is stale. Dim light seeps through yellowed blinds. The place is cluttered but lived in. A cereal bowl from the morning still sits in the sink.

BOSS is nowhere in sight.

Dr. Harrow walks slowly.

DR. HARROW

STAN? I just want to check in. No judgment, I promise.

She notices something strange — a burned-out candle sitting on the floor near the hallway. Another sits melted down to a stub on a shelf.

Her eyes move toward the cross on the wall.

It's slightly crooked.

DR. HARROW (CONT'D)

What the hell...

A soft creak.

She spins toward the bedroom door.

It's ajar. Darkness inside.

DR. HARROW (CONT'D)

STAN?

She steps closer.

INT. STAN'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

She opens the door slowly. It's dark. Curtains drawn.

STAN sits on the edge of the bed. Still. Smoking.
His voice low.

STAN
Why are you here?

DR. HARROW
You've missed sessions. Your
voicemail worried me.

She approaches cautiously, keeping her tone calm.

DR. HARROW (CONT'D)
You said you were having vivid
dreams. And then you stopped
showing up. I had to make sure—

STAN
You think I'm crazy?

DR. HARROW
I think you're going through
something real. Something dark. But
not hopeless.

She kneels slightly to meet his eye level.

DR. HARROW (CONT'D)
STAN... has anything happened
recently? Something you regret?

A beat. **STAN'S** face tightens.

STAN
I don't know anymore what's real.

His eyes shift — flick toward the wall.

The CROSS has slowly turned upside down.

Dr. Harrow follows his gaze.

Frozen.

DR. HARROW
Did you do that?

STAN
It does it on its own.

She turns to him slowly.

DR. HARROW

STAN... you need help.

He begins to tremble. Not with fear — with effort. Holding something in.

STAN

I didn't want to hurt anybody. I just wanted the dreams to stop.

A silence.

Then — something small: a faint, almost inaudible laugh, echoing inside the room. Not **STAN'S** voice.

Dr. Harrow rises, tense.

DR. HARROW

I think we should go. Right now. I can drive you somewhere safe.

STAN stands suddenly. His eyes wide, distant — as though something just passed through him.

STAN

I think... you should go.

A long beat.

DR. HARROW

STAN, listen to me—

STAN

Go.

Behind him — one of the candles relights.

Dr. Harrow backs away, slow and careful.

DR. HARROW

I'll call you tomorrow.

She turns, heads to the door.

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

She exits, breath tight in her chest.

As the door closes behind her, she hears:

STAN (O.S.)

(whispers, not his voice)
She's seen too much.

Dr. Harrow spins back – but the door is shut.

She walks away. Fast.

INT. POLICE STATION - DETECTIVE DIVISION EVENING.

A flurry of background chatter. Phones ring. Officers move in and out, cups of stale coffee in hand.

DR. EVELYN HARROW pushes through the front doors, clutching **STAN'S** file tightly. Her face is pale, her movements stiff.

She scans the room. Locks eyes on the bullpen – specifically, **DETECTIVE LAUREN SOSA** and **DET. SID CROSS** at a cluttered desk reviewing crime scene photos.

DR. HARROW

Excuse me... Detectives?

CROSS

Can we help you?

DR. HARROW

My name is **Dr. Evelyn Harrow**. I'm a licensed mental health professional. I believe I may have a patient who's... involved in your case.

SOSA perks up at that.

SOSA

Which case?

DR. HARROW

The Midnight Slasher.

CROSS slowly leans back in his chair, raising an eyebrow.

CROSS

You're saying you know who he is?

DR. HARROW

I can't say that conclusively. But I think you should look into a man named Stanley Brown. He's one of mine. I visited his apartment today. Something's wrong. Very wrong.

She places the folder on the desk. **CROSS** doesn't move to open it.

SOSA

What kind of "wrong"?

DR. HARROW

He's showing signs of dissociation. Delusions. He's been having recurring dreams of brutal killings — descriptions that match the crime scenes. And he's drawing things that... well, he shouldn't know.

SOSA flips open the file and sees **STAN'S** crude demon sketches. She squints.

CROSS

Dreams? Drawings?

He looks to **SOSA**.

CROSS (CONT'D)

You ever read Stephen King?

DR. HARROW

I'm serious. I know how this sounds, but I was in his apartment today. There were candles. The cross on his wall — it turned upside down while I was there.

CROSS

Did it spin its head and puke on you too?

SOSA

Sid—

CROSS

No, come on. We're neck-deep in blood, and now we're entertaining ghost stories from a shrink who should know better?

DR. HARROW

This isn't a ghost story. It's a warning.

Beat.

DR. HARROW (CONT'D)

I'm telling you... there's something inside him. Something that wakes up. I think he's not aware of what he's doing.

(MORE)

DR. HARROW (CONT'D)
But I've seen the aftermath in his
eyes. It's like there are two
people in that body.

SOSA
You have any physical evidence?
Weapons? Items connected to the
killings?

DR. HARROW
No... but—

CROSS
Then what you're saying is based on
a hunch. Vibes and crosses flipping
on their own?

She glares at him, frustrated.

DR. HARROW
If you wait for him to hand you a
bloody knife, it'll be too late.
Again.

Silence.

SOSA looks at the drawing again. Something about it holds
her.

SOSA
Do you know where he is now?

DR. HARROW
I left him at his apartment. He
asked me to go. I could feel the
temperature drop while I was there.
You think I scare easy? I don't.
But I ran.

CROSS
We'll keep it in mind. Thanks for
your time, Doctor.

Dismissal. Firm.

Dr. Harrow clenches her jaw, then slowly gathers her file.

DR. HARROW
If I'm right... and something
happens to someone else tonight...
you'll remember this moment.

She turns and walks out.

As the doors shut behind her—

SOSA

What if she's not wrong?

CROSS

Then he'll screw up. They always do.

SOSA

Unless he's not the one in control.

They both look at the drawing again.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. STAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

SERIES OF DREAM SEQUENCES:

- CLOSE ON: STAN'S BOOTS WALKING
- PAN UP TO: STEAK KNIFE glinting
- POV: JESSICA walks unaware, a shadow lunges, her neck slashed, blood gushes
- MALE VICTIM's throat cut, GIRL stabbed
- POV: Woman choked with chain, neck snapped.
- POV: CLAW HAMMER raised
- HOMELESS MAN beaten viciously, bones crunching
- BLOODY HANDS under running water

The clock on the nightstand TICKS LOUDLY.

TIME: 2:59 AM

Silence.

CLOSE ON: **STAN** — lying in bed, eyes shut. Still. Breathing slow.

CLICK.

The second hand hits 12.

TIME: 3:00 AM

Instantly —
CANDLES flicker to life.

The CROSS on the wall inverts.
The walls begin to bleed.

A low, guttural DEMONIC CHANT hums from nowhere and everywhere at once.

STAN'S EYES snap open – glowing faintly red.

He rises, stiff and automatic.

POV - STAN'S EYES

His breath fogs the air. Time feels slowed. The room pulses.

He opens his dresser drawer.

Inside – a MEAT CLEAVER, wrapped in an oily rag.

He unwraps it. His reflection in the blade is... smiling.

INT. STAN'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

The lights flicker.

STAN pulls on a BLACK HOODED SWEATSHIRT.

He walks to the front door.

CLOSE ON: Clock above the stove – 3:07 AM

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

The moon is full behind storm clouds.

STAN walks through the sleeping city like a ghost.

Ahead – a YOUNG MAN (20s, earbuds in, walking home alone, hoodie up).

STAN (V.O. - POSSESSED TONE)

Not random.

Necessary.

STAN follows.

EXT. EMPTY PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

The Young Man cuts through the lot. Humming to himself.

WHAM!

STAN SLAMS him against a dumpster.

The man struggles — a blur of panic — but Stan is overpowering.

SLICE.

The cleaver comes down — once —
twice —
three times.

Blood spatters the concrete.
A final, heavy chop. Silence.

STAN stands over the body.

Breathing heavily, face calm, distant.

He wipes the blade on the hoodie.

CLOSE ON: A glint in his eye. Satisfaction... or release?

EXT. STAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

STAN walks slowly home. A **BLOODY CLEAVER** hangs at his side.

3:45 AM

He opens the drawer. Places the cleaver inside.

Blood still drips from his sleeves.

INT. BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Washing the blood from his hands.

In the mirror — his own face flickers, then warps into the **DEMON'S** — then back.

STAN doesn't react.

INT. BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The **CANDLES** dim. The **CROSS** slowly flips back upright.

STAN changes clothes.

Tosses the bloody ones in the laundry basket.

Gets into bed.

CLOSE ON: His face as he closes his eyes.

DEMONIC VOICE (V.O.)

Sleeeeeeep, servant.
Tomorrow... we hunt again.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. STAN'S BEDROOM / KITCHEN - MORNING

BUZZZZZZ! BUZZZZZZZZ!

A cheap alarm clock blares. The digital screen reads:

7:45 AM

STAN (worn, wired) jolts awake.

The room is normal.

- Candles: extinguished.
- Cross on wall: upright.
- Walls: clean.

He rubs his eyes, coughs, lights a cigarette from the nightstand.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

STAN, dressed in dress slacks and a button up dress shirt, prepares cereal.

He pours milk over a cheap plastic bowl, sets it on the table beside a plastic spoon.

He eats, TV glowing in the corner. **BOSS**, his loyal mutt, sits nearby, hopeful.

ON TV - CHANNEL 14 MORNING NEWS**TV ANCHOR (V.O.)**

Good morning, City. It's 8:00 AM.
I'm Cassie Johnson with Channel 14 News.

TV ANCHOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

The so-called Midnight Slasher has claimed a 5th victim.
Still no suspects. No physical evidence. No eyewitnesses.

STAN eats silently. No reaction.

His eyes stare blankly at the screen.

A spoonful of cereal hovers near his mouth... forgotten.

BOSS watches him. Whimpers softly.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. POLICE HQ - DAY

Det. **SID CROSS** (grizzled, hungover) pulls up in his car. He steps out, checks his reflection in a tinted window, then heads inside.

INT. POLICE HQ - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

5 VICTIM PHOTOS are pinned to the wall. A long table holds crime scene photos, folders, and empty coffee cups. DET. **LAUREN SOSA** (sharp) is reviewing files.

CROSS enters and drops his duffel on a chair.

CROSS

What's the status?

SOSA

5 victims. 5 different scenes.

CROSS

What do we *know*?

SOSA

(shaking her head)
Nothing. No witnesses. No murder
weapon.
No forensic leads.

CROSS

(angry)
Nothing? What the hell does that
mean?

SOSA

Exactly what I said — nothing.

CROSS

Is there a criminal profile?

SOSA

Not yet.

CROSS

Then get me a profiler. Now.

SOSA exits.

CROSS stares at the crime scene photos on the table.

Seconds later, she returns with **DR. MICHAEL TRENT** (40s, bookish), clutching a file folder.

CROSS (CONT'D)
(grabs **TRENT** by the collar)
5 bodies and no profile?

TRENT is shaken but keeps his composure.

TRENT
We're working with limited data,
sir.
That's why it's not complete.

CROSS releases him.

TRENT lays the folder on the table.

TRENT (CONT'D)
Here's what we do know:
— 5 victims, all brutally murdered.
— Methods vary: slashing, stabbing,
bludgeoning, strangulation.
— All occurred between midnight and
5 AM.

CROSS slams the table.

CROSS
You know all that but still no
profile?

TRENT
Not a full one. But I've been
digging into old
serial killer profiles — looking
for similarities.
Maybe a copycat.

INT. POLICE HQ - CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

TRENT opens a folder thick with reports. **CROSS** snatches them and clears space, shoving crime scene photos aside to spread out old case files.

SOSA and **CROSS** each grab one.

TRENT studies the victim wall.

SOSA

(reading)
Patrick Kearney, "The Freeway
Killer."
21 victims, mostly young men. All
shot
in the temple.

She tosses the file aside.

SOSA (CONT'D)

Doesn't match. Ours doesn't seem to
target
young guys — or men specifically.

CROSS

(reading)
Randall Woodfield, the I-5 Killer.
18 victims, male and female.
Raped the women, shot with a
shotgun.

CROSS (CONT'D)

Sick fuck.

He throws that file aside too. **SOSA** picks up another.

SOSA

Ted Bundy. 35 confirmed. Young
women.
Bludgeoned, strangled, mutilated.
Kept their heads as trophies.

CROSS

Too specific. Too focused. Doesn't
feel right.

TRENT picks up another folder.

TRENT

John Wayne—

Before he can finish, **CROSS** slaps the file out of his hands.

TRENT (CONT'D)

—Gacy...

CROSS

Our guy's not a fucking pedophile!

TRENT

That's federal property.

TRENT retrieves the file calmly. **CROSS** continues reading.

CROSS

Gary Ridgway. 49 women, mostly sex workers.
Strangled. Dumped in the woods.
Necrophile.

CROSS (CONT'D)

Nope. No sexual motive here.

SOSA

They all have *some* sexual motive.

TRENT

She's right. Almost all serial killers
have been sexually motivated in some way.

CROSS

What kind of sick bastard gets off on murder?

SOSA

Real sick ones.

Silence.

The team looks over the mess of files.

CROSS

So what the hell do we actually know?

SOSA and **TRENT** exchange a glance.

SOSA

He lives alone. Low social contact.
Maybe owns a pet — something simple.

CROSS

(dry)
A dog? Fish? Lizard?

TRENT

Not a dog. Dogs need walks. Social spaces.
Parks. Our guy avoids people.
Reptiles or fish — low interaction, low maintenance.

SOSA

Makes sense.

CROSS

Perfect. We're looking for a lonely, antisocial fish enthusiast.

TRENT

Mentally unstable. Likely some personality disorder. Possibly bipolar. Low self esteem.

SOSA

Male and female victims. All nearby.
He's local.

TRENT

Agreed. Local resident. Likely late-night work — trucker, night security, janitor.

SOSA

Poorly educated.

CROSS

(laughs)
Great. That narrows it down to half the city.

CROSS walks back to the victim photos. **SOSA** flips through crime scene shots.

CROSS (CONT'D)

So when do we get an official profile?

TRENT

I'll have it uploaded by end of day.

CROSS rubs his temples.

CROSS

I've heard enough.
I need a drink after all that, I'll be at the bar. Call me if anything comes up.

CROSS (CONT'D)

(sarcastically)
Chow!

He heads for the door.

FADE OUT

JUMP BACK TO:

INT. STAN'S KITCHEN - MORNING

The morning news plays on a small, dusty TV. **STAN** (tired, working-class) turns it off mid-report. He sets a BOWL on the floor for his dog, **BOSS**, who licks the remains eagerly.

STAN pets **BOSS**, then lights a cigarette and takes a drag.

He picks up the now-empty bowl and tosses it – along with a cheap plastic fork and the takeout box – into the trash.

He grabs his coat.

INT./EXT. APARTMENT - MORNING

STAN tosses a treat to **BOSS** on his way out the door.

STAN
Later, **BOSS**.

EXT. BUS STOP - MORNING

STAN waits at the stop, cigarette in hand. The bus pulls up. He boards.

EXT. STAN'S WORKPLACE - DAY

STAN steps off the bus and heads into work.

INT. STAN'S WORKPLACE - DAY

STAN works hard. Focused. Routine. Just another day.

CUT TO:

EXT. ALLEYWAY - BOY CRIME SCENE - DAY

A row of patrol cars. CRIME TAPE flutters. **DET. SID CROSS** pulls up in his beat-up cruiser and joins **DET. LAUREN SOSA** by a covered body.

CROSS

What've we got?

SOSA lifts the cover to reveal a BLOODY CORPSE.

SOSA

Male, Looks like he was
Cut up to death — something heavy
and very sharp, probably.

CROSS

Any witnesses?

SOSA

No one saw the attack. Jogger found
him.
early this morning — noticed blood
called it in. Already questioned.

CROSS

Good. I want that report on my desk
before the day's over.

(beat)

CROSS (CONT'D)

And prep for overtime. That's 6
damn bodies in the morgue now.
(darkly)
Six families without answers.

CROSS (CONT'D)

I want this suspect found and DEAD.

SOSA gives him a look.

SOSA

What about an arrest? Due process?
Letting the courts handle it?

CROSS

You can tell that to the families.
Or better yet, go remind 'em what
happened to that child rapist last
week.
(fuming)

CROSS (CONT'D)

Walked free on a goddamn appearance
ticket.
He'll get probation at best. That's
what our system calls justice.

SOSA

CSI's still going over the scene.
They'll update us if they find
anything.

CROSS

Any next of kin on this one?

SOSA

Not yet. Still checking.

CROSS

Good. Keep on it. Let's find
something we can actually use.

He turns to leave.

CROSS (CONT'D)

Fuck the justice system...
I am the law — and the executioner.

He laughs and heads to his car.

SOSA

(calls out)
Where the hell are you going?
We still have a scene to process!

CROSS

That's what CSI's for.
I'm getting a drink, i'll be at the
bar.

CROSS drives off. **SOSA** watches, frustrated.

SOSA

(shaking her head)
It's only 11 A.M...

EXT. CITY STREET - BUS STOP - EVENING

STAN, pale and worn, stands smoking a cigarette as the sun
sets. The faint hiss of traffic and distant sirens create a
city symphony. The bus arrives.

INT. CITY BUS - EVENING

STAN rides in silence, staring out the window. The bus stops.
He gets off.

EXT. STAN'S APARTMENT - EVENING

STAN walks to the apartment, fatigue in every step.

INT. STAN'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - EVENING

The clock reads 7:55 PM. Stan unlocks the door. His DOG (**BOSS**), a mutt with soulful eyes, greets him excitedly.

STAN

Hey buddy. How was your day?
Were you a good boy? Miss me?

STAN fills **BOSS'S** water dish and pours dry kibble. He pops a TV dinner into the microwave and grabs a cold Cola.

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

STAN eats at the table with plasticware. **BOSS** watches him intently. The TV blares the news.

NEWS ANCHOR (V.O.)

I'm Ryan Cooper and this is Channel
14 News at 8. Still no leads in the
"Midnight Slasher" case.
The sixth victim was found today—an
20yo boy...

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Detective **SID CROSS**, hard-boiled, drinks at the bar. He opens a letter from Child Support Collections.

His phone rings. It's his EX-WIFE. They argue—loud, bitter.

FADE TO:

INT. STAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The apartment is quiet.

STAN sits in his recliner, smoking. A half-drunk can of Cola sweats on the side table. **BOSS** is curled up nearby, uneasy.

ON TV - Another crime show re-enactment.

STAN stares blankly.

He scratches his arm. Picks at his thumbnail. Restless.

STAN
(to **BOSS**, softly)
You think I'm crazy, huh?

BOSS lifts his head, sensing something — not **STAN'S** voice... something *behind* it.

STAN leans forward.

STAN (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
But I'm not... I know what crazy
feels like. This... this is
different.

He stands. Crosses to the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

STAN splashes water on his face. He stares at his reflection.
A faint flicker.

His reflection lingers — even after he's moved.

STAN
(whispers)
It's not me... right?

The reflection smirks. Just for a blink. Then syncs back up.

STAN recoils.

He exits fast.

INT. DR. HARROW'S OFFICE - NIGHT

DR. HARROW is alone. The office dim.

STAN'S file is open. Spread across the desk — pages of drawings, session transcripts, medication records.

She scrolls her screen — clicks through crime reports, maps, timestamps.

She overlays the timelines with **STAN'S** journal entries.

She stops cold.

The crimes match the nights **STAN** took his pills.

She grabs her phone. Calls.

VOICEMAIL (STAN V.O.)

Hi. This is **STAN**, Leave a message...or Don't.

She hangs up.

Grabs her coat.

EXT. STAN'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Dr. Harrow pulls up and parks.

She climbs the stairs, folder in hand.

She hesitates at his door.

Raises her fist — ready to knock.

But stops.

Something groans inside — like wood under pressure. A low, pulsing sound. Not mechanical.

She backs away.

Leaves.

INT. STAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

STAN sleeps uneasily. Sweat on his forehead.

SERIES OF DREAM SEQUENCES:

- CLOSE ON: STAN'S BOOTS WALKING
- PAN UP TO: STEAK KNIFE glinting
- POV: JESSICA walks unaware, a shadow lunges, her neck slashed, blood gushes
- MALE VICTIM's throat cut, GIRL stabbed
- POV: Woman choked with chain, neck snapped.
- POV: CLAW HAMMER raised
- HOMELESS MAN beaten viciously, bones crunching
- POV: boy, sliced to death,
- BLOODY HANDS under running water

The clock reads 2:59 AM.

CANDLES flicker on.

The CROSS begins to rotate.

Walls pulse. Bleed.

The DEMONIC HUM returns — distant, but growing.

STAN'S EYES snap open — dead, vacant.

He sits up, slow and mechanical.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

(POV - **STAN'S** EYES)

He opens a drawer. Inside: a COIL OF METAL WIRE and a BRICK.

He pockets both.

Pulls on a BLACK HOODED SWEATSHIRT.

The stove clock: 3:02 AM.

He walks out.

EXT. SIDE STREET - NIGHT

The neighborhood is still. A BICYCLIST (mid-20s, female, messenger bag slung) coasts home, earbuds in.

STAN steps out of the shadows. Calm. Methodical.

He waits.

The moment she slows near a pothole—

WHIP.

He yanks her off the bike with the metal wire — she hits the pavement hard.

She screams, but it's short.

He slams the brick into her skull. Again. Again.

A pool of blood spreads.

The wire wraps around her neck. A final pull.

Silence.

INT. STAN'S KITCHEN - 3:45 AM

STAN rinses the blood off his hands.

He wraps the brick in a towel, tucks it deep into a cabinet.

Candles flicker out. The cross reverts.

Everything resets.

STAN changes.

Crawls back into bed.

DEMONIC VOICE (V.O.)

Almost ready...

One more...

FADE TO BLACK

EXT. CITY ALLEY - EARLY MORNING

A pale blue dawn. Flashing RED AND BLUE LIGHTS reflect in puddles.

YELLOW POLICE TAPE cordons off the scene. A BICYCLE lies on the pavement. Nearby, EMTs zip a body bag closed.

DETECTIVE LAUREN SOSA kneels near a pool of blood, next to a dropped earbud and a cracked phone.

DETECTIVE SID CROSS paces behind her, cup of black coffee steaming in his hand. Cigarette unlit between his fingers.

A CSI TECH approaches with a notepad.

CSI TECH

Victim's name's Emily Tran. Twenty-six. Night courier. Had just clocked out. Body was found about twenty minutes ago by a baker opening shop across the street.

SOSA

(neutral, sharp)

Witness see anything?

CSI TECH

No. Heard something like a tire pop. Looked out — saw the body. That's it.

CROSS

(takes a breath)

Cause of death?

CSI TECH

Multiple cranial fractures. Severe blunt trauma. Signs of ligature strangulation too. A wire found nearby. Bloody. Bagged it.

SOSA

(strained)

So now we're using wire?

CROSS

He's improvising.

SOSA stands and walks toward the body bag as it's lifted into the ambulance.

SOSA

No weapon pattern. No victim profile. No motive.

CROSS

No signature. No witness. No prints. No fucking leads.

He finally lights the cigarette. Takes a long pull.

SOSA

Six different weapons. Six different bodies.

CROSS

(sarcastic)

At least he's creative.

SOSA

Or possessed.

CROSS raises an eyebrow.

CROSS

...what?

SOSA

He's not just killing. He's erasing himself.

CROSS

Or he's never *there* to begin with.

They both look back at the bloodstained ground.

A long silence.

SOSA

You know what this feels like?

CROSS

Yeah. We're chasing a ghost.

ON SCREEN RED TEXT:

NEXT NIGHT- SATURDAY

INT. STAN'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

STAN clicks off the TV. He sets down his paper plate for **BOSS** to lick clean.

He tosses the plate and plasticware into the trash.

STAN

Wow, buddy... I'm so exhausted.

INT. STAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

STAN changes clothes. The clock reads: 9:00 PM.

He takes two pills with water, turns off the lamp, and lies down.

DREAM SEQUENCE - SERIES OF FLASHES:

- CLOSE ON: Stan's BOOTS walking.
- PAN UP TO: A glinting STEAK KNIFE.
- POV: JESSICA walking. A shadow lunges—her neck is SLASHED.
- Blood gushes. Screams.
- A MALE VICTIM'S throat is cut. A GIRL is stabbed.
- A woman's neck is SNAPPED with a METAL CHAIN.
- A CLAW HAMMER raised high — then down, again and again.
- A HOMELESS MAN beaten senseless. Bones CRUNCH.
- A YOUNG BOY slashed to death.
- BLOODY HANDS under a running faucet.
- A GIRL on a BIKE — struck down violently. Blood everywhere.

INT. STAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - 3:00 AM

HUNTING MUSIC plays.

CANDLES flicker to life.
The WALLS begin to BLEED.
The CROSS turns upside down.

DEMON (V.O.)
HaHAHAHAHAHAHA!

STAN bolts upright. Blank stare. Possessed.
He moves mechanically — dresses in jeans and a black hoodie.
From a TOOLBOX, he pulls out a 3-PRONG HAND GARDEN RAKE.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

POV - STAN'S EYES

He walks the empty sidewalks.
Silent. Intent.

Up ahead: A FEMALE EMPLOYEE exits a building, heading to her car.

STAN follows. Closer.

Suddenly — he DRIVES the rake into her back, PINNING her to the car.

Blood sprays across the glass.

She screams, gurgles — lifted in the air — then dropped.

Dead.

He picks up her body. Tosses it into a nearby DUMPSTER.

Then walks away, calm, unbothered.

INT. STAN'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT - 3:45 AM

STAN enters.

He drops the BLOODY RAKE back into the toolbox.
Heads toward the bedroom.

INT. STAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Candles still flicker.

The CROSS remains upside down.

The WALLS continue to bleed.

STAN changes back into pajamas.

Tosses bloody clothes in the hamper.

Crawls into bed.

DEMON (V.O.)

Sleeeeeeep tighttttt... Hahaha...

FADE TO BLACK

INT. STAN'S BEDROOM - MORNING - 7:45 AM

BUZZZZZZ! BUZZZZZZ!

The alarm blares.
Everything is normal.

- Candles: extinguished
- Cross: upright
- Walls: clean

STAN wakes. Lights a cigarette.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

STAN, dressed for the day, eats a donut and drinks coffee.

BOSS sits nearby, hopeful. The TV hums in the background.

TV ANCHOR (V.O.)

Good morning, City. It's 8:00 AM.
The body of a woman was discovered
in a dumpster last night, impaled
with what police believe was a 3-
pronged gardening tool.
Still no suspects.

STAN stares at the screen. Unblinking.

He lights another cigarette.

STAN

This is bullshit, **BOSS**. These
dreams...
they're just like the news.

(beat)

STAN (CONT'D)
You think I'm the killer?
smirks, shaken
Nah... that's funny, right?

He drops his napkin in the trash.

Tosses **BOSS** a treat. The dog catches it.

EXT. BUS STOP - MORNING

STAN stands quietly, cigarette in hand, as the bus approaches.

FADE IN:

INT. STAN'S APARTMENT - HALLWAY - DAY

The apartment door drifts open slightly.

BOSS, **STAN'S** dog, quietly slips out into the hallway – unnoticed.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. WORKSHOP - DAY

STAN works silently. He steps outside, lights a cigarette. After a few drags, he stomps it out and returns to work.

EXT. BUS STOP - EVENING

STAN stands at the bus stop, cigarette smoldering in his fingers. The bus arrives. He gets on.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - EVENING

STAN arrives home. The clock reads 7:55 PM.

INT. STAN'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

STAN steps inside. The apartment door is slightly ajar. Odd.

STAN
(quietly)
BOSS? Hey boy, where are you?

He looks around. No sign of **BOSS**.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. STAN'S APARTMENT BUILDING - HALLWAY - DAY

DR. HARROW (determined but tense) stands at **STAN'S** door, glancing around. She checks a notecard — **STAN BROWN, APT 3B**.

She pulls out a slim tool and fumbles with the lock — it clicks open.

INT. STAN'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

The door creaks open.

BOSS, **STAN'S** loyal mutt, trots over curiously. Tail wagging.

DR. HARROW

Hey there, buddy... Easy...

She steps inside. **BOSS** slips right past her — out into the hall.

She doesn't notice.

DR. HARROW (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

STAN, what the hell are you hiding...

INT. STAN'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Dr. Harrow carefully opens drawers. Everything seems normal — until she finds the toolbox under the sink.

She opens it.

Inside: a blood-caked 3-prong hand rake, a hammer, and a kitchen knife, all wrapped in cloth.

She stares, horrified. Takes a step back, breathing harder.

She opens a closet: folded black hoodie, bloody undershirt, and a pair of jeans crusted with dried blood.

Her hand flies to her mouth.

Suddenly — a faint creak behind her.

She spins — nothing.

She bolts toward the door.

INT. STAN'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

She swings it open — **realizing** it was left ajar. **BOSS** is gone.

She fumbles for her phone, dials.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. SID CROSS'S OFFICE - DAY

SID CROSS (cigarette in mouth, mid paperwork) answers.

CROSS

This is **CROSS**

DR. HARROW (V.O.)

This is **Dr. Evelyn Harrow**. I need you to listen. It's **STAN BROWN** — I think there's something in his apartment. I just— I found what looks like blood. Weapons. Clothes. He—
(panicked beat)
I think he's your guy.

CROSS

Wait, what the hell were you doing in his apartment?

DR. HARROW (V.O.)

That's not important. Just— get someone there. Now.

CROSS

Stay put.

He hangs up.

BACK TO:

INT. STAN'S APARTMENT - DAY

Dr. Harrow stares down the empty hallway, her breath shaky.

She closes the door slowly... but it doesn't latch all the way.

SMASH TO BLACK.

INT. STAN'S APARTMENT - LATER

STAN returns home again, this time exhausted and somber. The clock shows 10:00 PM. He's been out searching.

He drops his keys, skips dinner, and trudges to the bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

The clock shows 10:15 PM. **STAN** changes clothes, gets into bed.

He takes two pills from a bottle on the nightstand, swallows them with a sip of water.

He shuts off the lamp.

DREAM SEQUENCE - MURDER MONTAGE**SERIES OF DREAM SEQUENCES:**

- CLOSE ON: STAN'S BOOTS WALKING
- PAN UP TO: STEAK KNIFE glinting
- POV: JESSICA walks unaware, a shadow lunges, her neck slashed, blood gushes
- MALE VICTIM's throat cut, GIRL stabbed
- POV: Woman choked with chain, neck snapped.
- POV: CLAW HAMMER raised
- HOMELESS MAN beaten viciously, bones crunching
- POV: boy, sliced to death,
- BLOODY HANDS under running water
- POV: A girl riding a bike, girl on ground blood flying everywhere,
- POV: A girl walking to her car, the rake jammed in her back lifting her off ground against her car, blood everywhere.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT - 3:00 AM**HUNTING MUSIC PLAYS**

CANDLES light up on the dresser.
A CROSS slowly flips upside down.
Walls bleed.

STAN bolts upright in bed.

POV - DAZED AND POSSESSED

He gets dressed: jeans, black hoodie.

Leaves the apartment.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: **STAN'S** BOOTS

He sees a RANDOM GUY.

STAN picks up a wood chopping axe.

STAN FOLLOWS HIM

RANDOM GUY

Yo bro, you got a problem?

POV - STAN'S EYES

STAN swings.

THWACK!

The axe lands square in the forehead.

Blood oozes between the guy's eyes.

SLOW SPIN OUT - the axe lodged in the bloody head.

STAN walks away.

CLOSE ON: **STAN'S** BOOTS WALKING

PAN UP TO: BLOODY AXE - DRIPPING

INT. STAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

POV - STAN'S EYES

Hunting music plays.

STAN walks into the apartment.

The CLOCK on the wall reads 3:45 AM.

DEMON (V.O.)

(demonic laugh)

Ha-ha! Ha-ha-ha-ha!

STAN heads to the bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Hunting music continues.

Candles flicker on the dresser.

A cross on the wall hangs upside down.

The walls ooze a blood-like substance, dripping slowly.

STAN hangs up his black hoodie, changes into bed clothes, tosses the dirty clothes in a basket, and lies down.

DEMONIC VOICE (V.O.)

Sleeeeeep tightttttttt...

Ha-ha-ha-ha...

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

The room is quiet.

The CLOCK reads 7:45 AM.

Candles are out.

The cross is now right side up.

No blood on the walls.

BUZZING ALARM

BBBUZZ! BBBUUZZZ!

STAN wakes, lights a cigarette, smokes.

He dresses in dress slacks and a dress button up-shirt, heads to the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

STAN cooks breakfast.

He sets a paper plate and cheap plasticware on the table and sits to eat.

He puts out his cigarette, turns on the TV.

TV AUDIO

**- MORNING NEWS (V.O.) - FEMALE
REPORTER**

Good morning, city. It's 8 AM on this beautiful day. I'm Cassie Johnson, and this is Channel 14 News.

NEWS REPORTER (V.O.)

In today's news, yet another body has been found — this time with an axe lodged in the victim's head. No suspects. No leads. No witnesses. Authorities believe this is the work of the same individual now dubbed... **"The Midnight Slasher."**

STAN finishes his food, shuts off the TV.

He sets the plate down for his dog, **BOSS** — but **BOSS** isn't there.

STAN pauses.

He stares at the plate on the floor.

He lights another cigarette.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

STAN sighs, picks up the plate.

He tosses it and the plasticware into the trash along with breakfast wrappers.

INT. APARTMENT DOORWAY - MORNING

STAN leaves for work.

As he steps out, he tosses a dog treat onto the floor — out of habit.

He stops. The treat just lies there.
Boss isn't coming for it.

He exits.

INT. STAN'S WORKPLACE - DAY

STAN works. Focused. Quiet.

Steps out for a cigarette.

He smokes.

Stomps it out.

Goes back inside.

INT. STAN'S WORKPLACE - DAY

STAN works quietly. Steps out for another smoke.

INT. POLICE HQ - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

DETECTIVE LAUREN SOSA stands over a cluttered table – victim photos, crime scene shots, coffee rings staining paperwork. **SID CROSS** enters, steaming paper cup in hand, still wearing last night's hangover.

CROSS

Morning. You look like hell.

SOSA

That's funny – I was just about to say the same to you.

She slides a manila folder across the table. Bloodstained photo clipped on the front.

SOSA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Another one. Dumpster behind a liquor store. Axe buried in the skull.

CROSS scans the report. Grimaces.

CROSS

Jesus Christ... He's unraveling.

SOSA

No. He's evolving. Sloppier maybe, but bolder. He doesn't care who sees the aftermath.

CROSS

He never did. Just didn't need to leave a message... until now.

Beat.

She studies him – the weight of this case etched into both their faces.

CROSS (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

We got a call. **Dr. Evelyn Harrow.**
Says she knows him.

SOSA

Knows him how?

CROSS

He's her patient. Name's **STAN BROWN.** Mid-thirties. Low income, on medication, multiple diagnoses.

SOSA

And?

CROSS

She broke into his apartment. Found weapons. Bloody clothes. Pet dog.

SOSA

She broke in?

CROSS

Yeah. Can't use a shred of it in court, but if she's not full of shit, we might finally have something.

SOSA leans forward, tapping her pen against the photo.

SOSA

So what now?

CROSS

We run it. Fuck the red tape. We knock. See if he cracks.

SOSA

No warrant?

CROSS

You want to wait around while he racks up body number nine?

Beat. She stares at him, then nods — resolve sharpening.

CROSS (CONT'D)

(sarcastically)

Plus, I don't plan on brining him in.. I'm sure the city wants what I want too.

SOSA

Let's go get this son of a bitch.

They grab their coats – grim, determined.

CUT TO:

EXT. STAN'S APARTMENT BUILDING - EVENING

The clock reads: 4:45 PM.

STAN (worn, detached) unlocks the building door and enters.

INT. STAN'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

He steps inside. On the floor – the dog treat he tossed that morning still lies untouched.

STAN pauses. His eyes darken.

He kneels, picks it up, and tosses it into the trash without a word.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

STAN prepares dinner. Something microwaved. Paper plate. Plastic cutlery. Mechanical motions.

He doesn't speak. Doesn't react.

Just... goes through the motions.

EXT. STAN'S APARTMENT BUILDING - EVENING

A BLACK SUV SCREECHES to a stop.

DET. SID CROSS and **DET. LAUREN SOSA** exit – focused, armed, adrenaline high.

They slam the doors and move fast – up the stairs two at a time.

INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY - EVENING

SOSA pounds on the door.

SOSA

FBI! **STAN BROWN** – OPEN THE DOOR!

CROSS positions beside the entrance, gun raised.

SOSA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
STAN BROWN! THIS IS THE FBI!
WE'RE COMING IN!

She twists the knob.

Unlocked.

She swings the door wide and steps aside—

INT. STAN'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

—**STAN** stands in the kitchen. A kitchen knife in his hand.

He flinches at the sudden intrusion—

STAN
Whoa—!

SOSA
KNIFE!

CROSS doesn't hesitate.

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! — he opens fire.

A deafening volley — three, four, five, six, seven, shots.

Some miss.

Most do not.

BULLETS RIP THROUGH STAN —

—Shoulders, torso, chest, arms, neck.

The knife clatters to the floor.

Blood spatters the walls. He slams backward into the kitchen tiles.

STAN
(gasping)
...wait...

His knees buckle.

He slides down the wall, lifeless before he hits the floor.

Silence.

INT. STAN'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Blood pools beneath **STAN'S** bullet riddled body.

CROSS lowers his weapon, breathing hard.

SOSA scans the room, methodical. She opens drawers, rifles through papers.

She spots a manila envelope labeled:

"STANLEY BROWN - EVALUATION"

She opens it.

INSERT - MENTAL HEALTH FILE

Subject: **STANLEY BROWN**

Diagnosis: Borderline Personality Disorder, Bipolar Type II, Dissociative Episodes, Delusional Psychosis.

Notes: Unresponsive to medication. Increasing dream intensity. Potential for identity fragmentation.

SOSA

(reads softly)

He wasn't acting alone... not in his head.

She tucks the file under her arm and looks at **STAN'S** body — her expression unreadable.

Across the room, **CROSS** searches.

He stops.

CROSS

SOSA... I need an evidence bag.
Come look at this.

Inside the drawer: a blood-stained CLAW HAMMER.

SOSA walks over — but first, she spots something nearby: a toolbox.

She opens it — inside is a bloody 3-prong hand rake.

She carefully removes it, gloved, and seals it in a zip evidence bag.

She joins **CROSS**, collects the hammer, bags that too.

FADE TO:

INT. BAR - NIGHT

SID CROSS and **LAUREN SOSA** sit at the bar. A round of shots in front of them. Empty bottles nearby. Both look like they've been drinking for a while.

They raise their glasses.

CROSS

(*slurring*)
We did it...

SOSA

No. You did it.

CROSS

Yeah, I shot that fucker so many times...
My trigger finger still hurts!

He laughs. A deep, exhausted, dark laugh.

CROSS (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Hahaha!

SOSA

Yeah, you did...
But you missed half of 'em.

They both laugh — too hard. The kind of laugh that barely hides how close they were to breaking.

LATER THAT NIGHT - INT. BAR

SOSA checks her phone. The screen's too bright in the dim bar. She winces.

She stretches. Her body aches.

SOSA

Hey **CROSS**... I'm done, man.
I'm heading home. Sleep time.

CROSS leans in, sloppy and half-hanging on her.

CROSS

Come ooon... We got the bad guy!
Enjoy it! Just a little more...

SOSA

Some of us actually work.
We've got a report to file in the morning. Remember?

CROSS

Party poooooerrrr...
You're no fun.

He reaches out for a chair to steady himself.

SOSA smirks, shrugs him off gently, and walks toward the door.

He watches her go — a flicker of sobriety, maybe respect, maybe envy.

FADE TO:

EXT. CITY STREET - MORNING

The rising sun cuts across the skyline. Life moves on.
Unaware.

TV NEWS - V.O. (CASSIE JOHNSON)

Good morning, City! It's 8AM on
this beautiful day.
I'm Cassie Johnson, and this is
Channel 14 News.

INT. LIVING ROOM - VARIOUS APARTMENTS - INTERCUT

We see city residents watching the morning news:

- A tired mother pouring cereal.
- A guy in a gym towel.
- A bodega owner unlocking his gate.
- A teenager glued to her phone, half-listening.

CASSIE JOHNSON (V.O.)

In today's news — the "Midnight
Slasher" has been stopped.

A PHOTO of **STAN BROWN** appears on the screen: neutral face,
DMV-quality.

CASSIE JOHNSON (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Identified as **STANLEY BROWN** — a
psychologically unstable male.
FBI Detectives **SID CROSS** and **LAUREN
SOSA** attempted to arrest him last
night at his residence.
He allegedly lunged at the agents
with a steak knife, prompting Det.
CROSS to open fire — killing the
suspect at the scene.

CASSIE JOHNSON (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Further investigation revealed
murder weapons linked to recent
killings:
A claw hammer and a 3-pronged hand
rake, a steak knife.

ON TV — stock footage of a police cruiser behind caution
tape.

CASSIE JOHNSON (V.O.)**(CONT'D)** (CONT'D)

That's it for now. I'm Cassie
Johnson with Channel 14 News.
Have a great day — and be well,
City.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. DR. HARROW'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Rain taps softly against the window.
Lightning flickers across the skyline.

DR. EVELYN HARROW (weary but composed) sits at her desk, a
steaming mug now long gone cold. Before her — an open file:

BROWN, STANLEY

A desk lamp flickers once. Then again.

She exhales deeply, trembling slightly as she closes the
folder.

Her gaze drifts to the bookshelf.

Tucked between heavy psychology texts: **STAN'S** sketch — a
crude drawing of a horned shadow figure, fire, blood,
floating bodies.

She stares at it.

A beat.

HARROW

(softly)

What...?

Thunder rolls outside.

She rises slowly and walks to the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

She flicks on the light.

The mirror fogs — though no water runs.

She wipes it clear.

Suddenly —

STAN'S BLOODY REFLECTION flashes behind her.

She WHIPS around.

Nothing.

She grips the sink. Breath shallow.

DEMONIC VOICE (V.O.)

You opened the door... doctor.

The lights flicker rapidly.

Her reflection lags — a split-second delay.

Then —

The reflection smiles.

A smile she does not make.

The eyes in the reflection turn black.

HARROW

(whispers)

No...

The reflection reaches through the glass —
Then SNAPS BACK TO NORMAL.

Her reflection matches her again.

The room is still.

She backs away from the mirror, eyes wide.

INT. BEDROOM - LATER

Dr. Harrow lies in bed. Eyes wide open. Tense.

Then, slowly... she drifts off to sleep.

DREAM SEQUENCE - MURDER MONTAGE

— CLOSE ON: **STAN'S** BOOTS walking

— STEAK KNIFE gleaming

(MORE)

HARROW (CONT'D)

- Jessica - neck slashed, blood sprays
- Man's throat cut, girl stabbed
- Chain around a woman's neck - snap
- Claw hammer raised - homeless man crushed
- Blood on hands, running water
- Bike crash - blood-soaked pavement
- Rake impaled through back - body lifted
- Bloody axe - slow drip

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

The digital clock clicks over:

2:59 AM

3:00 AM

DEMON (V.O.)

demonic laugh
HAHAHAHAHAHA...

CANDLES ignite across the dresser.

The cross flips upside down.

The walls ooze thick, dark blood.

CLOSE ON - HARROW'S FACE

Her eyes SNAP OPEN - glowing RED.

Possessed.

She rises slowly. Mechanical. Silent.

INT. APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

She pulls on jeans and a black hoodie.

Draws the hood up.

Opens the door. Exits.

EXT. DARK ALLEY - NIGHT

A figure walks through mist and shadow.

CLOSE ON — BOOTS stepping through puddles.

She lowers her hood.

REVEAL:

DR. HARROW.

Her face calm. Cold.

Eyes burning RED.

She grins — wide and inhuman.

SMASH TO BLACK

DEMON (V.O.)

HAHA... HAHA HAHA HA!

FINAL TEXT ON SCREEN:

Evil doesn't die.

It just waits...

for someone else.

THE END

